

Appn. Number 09/031,578 (Blume) GAU 3736 Amnt. contd.

41. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 40, wherein the step of gargling with said sampling liquid for a period of at least 5 seconds, during which time said sampling liquid is in contact with the lower aspects of the pharynx.
42. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 40, wherein said analysis is measurement of the pH of said liquid sample.
43. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 42, wherein the pH measurement is obtained by a technique selected from the group consisting of colorimetric indicator substance, pH meter and digital read device.
44. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 42, wherein said pH is compared with specified pH values, to identify the presence of abnormal liquid sample pH.
45. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 44, wherein said pH is correlated to the presence and degree of the physiologic condition of gastroesophageal reflux, with said pH being a function of the presence and extent of said reflux.
46. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 45, wherein said sampling liquid comprises about 5ml potable water of known pH.

Appn. Number 09/031,578 (Blume) GAV 3736 Amnt. contd.

47. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 46, wherein said water is selected from the group consisting of tap water, bottled water, distilled water or saline solution.
48. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 42, wherein said collection container:
  - (a) is made of translucent, solid material and is reusable;
  - (b) is of sufficient size to be held in the hand and to allow for collection of said sampling liquid as it falls from the mouth by gravity force, said collection container being held under the mouth with the head tilted forward; and
  - (c) has a horizontal marker to indicate an adequate volume of said retrieved sampling liquid.
49. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 48, wherein said volume is at least 2ml.
50. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 42, wherein there is an interval period of about 30 minutes or more between the last ingestion or oral hygiene activity and said gargling.
51. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 43, wherein said pH is determined by combining with said liquid sample an appropriate amount of a pH indicator selected from the group consisting of pH indicator solution, pH indicator powder and pH indicator paper.

Appn. Number 09/031,578 (Blume) GAU 3736 Amnt. contd.

52. The method for obtaining and analyzing a liquid sample as defined in Claim 51, wherein:

- (a) said pH indicator is bromothymol blue solution having a pH scale of about 6.0 to 7.6 pH units, with distinct color intervals of 0.2 pH units or less;
- (b) said bromothymol blue solution is added dropwise to said liquid sample followed by periodic light agitation of said collection container to ensure mixing of said solution with said liquid sample; and
- (c) the resulting color of said liquid sample is observed after a suitable period of time from addition of said solution, through said translucent collection container, to determine the pH of said liquid sample by comparison of said color with a pH-color chart provided with said solution.

**REMARKS**

1. Applicant has amended the title to coincide with the prior action restricting the claims to those drawn to a method.
2. Applicant has amended the Specification in some areas to clarify terminology.
3. Claims 2(a), 21-23, 16-18 and 24-25 of the original application are cancelled.
4. Subject matter of Claims 3-15 and 19-20 of the original application is addressed in the Amendment by rewritten Claims 42 through 52.
5. Subject matter of Claims 1 and 2(b) of the original application is addressed in the Amendment by written Claims 40 and